The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Green-man of Trawden Forest.

In the heart of Trawden Forest, where ancient trees whispered secrets and sunlight filtered through a dense canopy, there dwelled a mystical being known as the Green-man. The Green-man, an enigmatic figure, was said to be the guardian of the forest, entrusted with its well-being and the cycle of life within. Legend had it that the Green-man emerged each spring, heralding the rebirth and growth of the forest. As winter's chill gave way to the tender warmth of spring, the Green-man would awaken from his slumber, his essence infused with the energy of nature's renewal.

The origins of the Green-man were lost to the mists of time, but the people of Trawden Forest believed that he was an ancient spirit bound to the land. They whispered tales of his existence through generations, passing down the knowledge of his presence to those who dared to venture deep into the woods.

Long ago, Trawden Forest was developed for vaccary farming, overseen by the de Lacey overlords. The lord of Clitheroe had established vaccaries within the forest, where tenants tended to their cattle. The forest teemed with life, as cows and bulls roamed freely beneath the sheltering boughs.

However, the forest was not without its perils. Wolves roamed its depths, and occasional outbreaks of plague claimed the lives of the cattle. The lord's officers, Simon the Geldherd and Geoffrey the Parker, struggled to maintain order amidst the wildness of nature.

Among the tenants of the vaccaries were Adam son of John, Maud wife of Jordan del Booth, Emma del Monkroyd, Henry de Emmott, and Peter del Fernyside. They diligently managed their herds, braving the challenges posed by both the natural and supernatural realms.

The Greenman, ever watchful, observed the tenants and their stewardship of the forest. He recognized their efforts in preserving the delicate balance of life. Guided by his ancient wisdom, the Greenman aided them in times of need, protecting their cattle from predators and offering solace during hardships.

Throughout the years, the Greenman's presence remained a source of comfort and awe. His ethereal figure could sometimes be glimpsed among the branches, his eyes glowing with a vibrant green hue. Villagers spoke of witnessing his benevolent influence, ensuring the prosperity of Trawden Forest and its inhabitants.

However, not all who entered the forest respected its sanctity. Trespassers, driven by greed or ignorance, would venture into the realm of the Greenman. They would fell trees without regard for the interconnectedness of all living things or disturb the peace that dwelled within.

In 1345, the forest faced a great challenge when William Fauvell and his companions trespassed into Queen Isabella's free chase at Trawden. They hunted without permission, slaying the deer that roamed freely, and even assaulted one of the Queen's servants, Adam the Proctor.

The Greenman, enraged by such blatant disregard for the forest's harmony,

stirred with an ancient fury. He called upon the forces of nature, summoning a tempest of wind and rain that swept through the forest. Thunder crashed and lightning illuminated the darkened sky, a warning to those who defied the sacred boundaries.
As the storm raged, the trespassers were disoriented, their arrogance shattered by the might of the Greenman's wrath. They stumbled through the underbrush, desperate to find their way out of the forest, but the Greenman's power held them captive, reminding them of their transgressions.
Finally, humbled and repentant, the trespassers fell to their knees, pleading for mercy. The Green-man, recognizing the sincerity in their words, relented.

By Donald Jay